



# UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA

## TRABAJO FIN DE ESTUDIOS

Título

Metáforas primarias en el ámbito publicitario: una  
comparación entre productos tangibles e intangibles

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Departamento

FILOLOGÍAS MODERNAS

Curso académico

2019-20



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# TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO

Título

**Primary metaphors in advertising: a comparison  
between tangible and intangible products  
Metáforas primarias en el ámbito publicitario:  
una comparación entre productos tangibles e  
intangibles**

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2019/20





## **Abstract**

Primary metaphors have become one of the main focal points for the present-day global advertising area, however little research has been conducted on how they operate as regards the nature of the product/service being advertised. For this reason, this essay aims to provide (1) further insights into the pervasiveness and functioning of primary metaphors in printed advertisements; and (2) a thorough analysis on their productivity in relation to the nature of product, i.e. tangible or intangible. For that purpose, a selection of 60 printed advertisements - 30 from each type- has been compiled. On the one hand, the pervasiveness of primary metaphors in contrast with that of resemblance metaphors has been identified by analysing down to the last detail of the advertisements under scrutiny. On the other hand, an inventory of the source and target domains, and a formal description has been carried out regarding the interaction between primary metaphors and the product/service being advertised. Upon concluding the analysis, their frequency of occurrence in tangible and intangible products was determined. Therefore, the study of the aforementioned features (i.e. resemblance and primary metaphors; and tangible and intangible product advertisements) reveals that primary metaphors are more efficient in the area of advertising - due to their bodily, experiential basis- and display a major cognitive effect in the advertisements of tangible products – owing to the nature of the product.

Key words: advertising, primary metaphors, tangible products, intangible products.

## **Resumen**

Actualmente las metáforas primarias se han convertido en uno de los principales focos de atención global en el área de la publicidad, no obstante, el número de estudios realizados acerca de su funcionamiento, en relación a la naturaleza del producto/servicio anunciado, es reducido. Este Trabajo de Fin de Grado por lo tanto trata de ofrecer: (1) nuevas perspectivas acerca de la presencia y el funcionamiento de las metáforas primarias en anuncios impresos; y (2) un análisis exhaustivo de su productividad, atendiendo a la naturaleza de los productos en el que se utilizan, i.e. tangible o intangible. Para ello, se ha recopilado una selección de 60 anuncios impresos – 30 de cada tipo. Por una parte, a través de un análisis profundo, se ha identificado una mayor presencia de metáforas primarias frente a las metáforas por semejanza. Por otra parte, se ha llevado a cabo un inventario de aquellos dominios fuente y meta presentes en los anuncios utilizados, y una descripción formal de como interaccionan dichas metáforas con los productos/servicios anunciados. Al finalizar el análisis, se ha estudiado la frecuencia con la que encontramos metáforas primarias en productos tangible e intangibles. Por todo ello, el estudio de los rasgos anteriores (i.e. las metáforas primarias y por semejanza; y los anuncios de productos tangibles e intangibles) revela una mayor frecuencia de las metáforas primarias en el área de la publicidad – por estar basada en experiencias- y un mayor efecto cognitivo en aquellos anuncios de productos tangibles – debido a su naturaleza.

Palabras clave: publicidad, metáforas primarias, productos tangibles, productos intangibles.

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## **1. Introduction**

The role and effects of cognitive metaphors in advertising and marketing-related issues has recently attracted the attention from advertising specialists. Therefore, linguists have begun to look into the metaphorical basis of advertising with the aim of developing a further understanding of the use and workings of those metaphors in the context of advertising, taking into account a wide variety of modes (audial, visual, textual) and formats ( newspapers, magazines, directories...).

The present investigation analyses the types of cognitive metaphor (resemblance vs. primary) found in a corpus of printed advertisements that include both tangible and intangible products. This is done with a view to clarifying which type of metaphors are more prevalent in this genre and also to identifying the role and effects of those metaphors in the consumers' perception and linking of the products.

From these general objectives stem the following specific research goals for the analysis of primary metaphors in tangible and immaterial products as found in the advertisements that make up the corpus of analysis:

1. to assess the pervasiveness of primary metaphors, in comparison to resemblance metaphors, in printed advertisements.
2. to provide an inventory of the source and target notions which are communicated by those primary metaphors.
3. to compare the frequency of occurrence of primary metaphors in tangible and intangible product advertisements.

The essay is organized as follows. Section 2 introduces a short summary of the theoretical background needed in order to understand the main concepts that we will be dealing with. It includes a brief introduction to Cognitive Linguistics and Cognitive Semantics, as well as the definition of primary metaphor and the criteria that distinguish it from resemblance metaphor. Section 3 offers a brief overview of the yet scarce literature on primary metaphors within the field of advertising. Section 4 describes the corpus and the methodology used for the study. Section 5 reports on the results of the analysis. The final section summarises the results and establishes new lines for further research.



## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1 Cognitive Linguistics

As already stated in the introduction, one of the purposes of this essay is to make use of the theoretical tools provided by cognitive linguistics, i.e. primary metaphors, in order to analyse and comprehend the advertisements developed by certain companies.

Cognitive Linguistics is a modern school of linguistic thought that had its origin in 1987 as a result of two ground-breaking publications: Lakoff's (1987) *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*; and *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Theoretical Prerequisites* written by Langacker (1987).

However, recent scholars (Evans and Green, 2006: 3) have stated that this discipline really emerged in the early 1970s, caused by the spreading of Cognitive Science. From this point onwards, the research in this area began to proliferate and, therefore, the cognitive field progressively evolved. By the 1990s the International Cognitive Linguistics Society and the journal *Cognitive Linguistics* were established, which "marked the birth of cognitive linguistics as a broadly grounded, self-conscious intellectual movement" (Langacker, 2002: 15).

Cognitive Linguistics focuses on the relationship between language and thought, assuming that language is a primary indicator for the patterns of thought. As Evans and Green (2006:5) explained, "Language offers a window into cognitive function, providing insights into the nature, structure and organisation of thoughts and ideas". Hence, broadly speaking, Cognitive Linguistics affirms that language is like raw data that reflects those important features that reside in our mind; and that theorists use to build their theories up.

This cognitive movement is guided by three main principles, which perfectly describe its bases (Croft and Cruse, 2004:1):

Firstly, language should not be considered as an autonomous cognitive skill. For them, language cannot be described as an independent and innate module, but as a feature that is located in a network of relationships with other cognitive abilities.

Secondly, grammar is conceptualisation, i.e. the grammatical structure of the language is linked to how humans perceive and conceptualise a determinate situation of the real world. A common example that is used to illustrate this idea is the sentence: *The fence runs around the house*. Fences, as inert entities, do not have the ability to move.

Nonetheless, the sentence is grammatically expressed in this way due to our subjective impression. Our eyes explore the longitudinal space so that it creates a sensation of movement in the explored object.

Finally, knowledge of language emerges from language in use. For cognitivists “central” and “peripheral” linguistic phenomena are equally important as the both contribute to language in use, which is responsible for meaning production, in our attempt to interact with the world.

Nevertheless, the set of guiding principles, assumptions and perspectives, which arose from these hypotheses, did not come out of the blue. The reality is that this functional approach appeared as a reaction to Objectivism.

This philosophical tradition postulates that reality is objective and therefore an absolute meaning is created from “real world” objects and our relationships with them. To such a degree, meaning, which arises from an objective reality, will be considered as universal for every human being, independently of individual interpretations or context (pragmatics). Based on this principle, objectivists stated that language, used to explain a non-subjective reality, must be direct. That is, literal language must be used in order to be faithful to our reality, reducing the usage of figurative language, which was considered as a mere ornamentation.

As an opposition to this stream of thought, George Lakoff, in the preface of *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*, attempted to dismantle those principles and arguments stated by Objectivism, and reflected in linguistic theories such as Generative Grammar or Truth Values (Semantics). For Lakoff (1987), Johnson (1980) and other cognitivists, language should be considered from an experiential perspective.

In sharp contrast to Objectivism, Experientialism considers reality as subjective. In other words, every linguistic unit develops a concrete meaning attending to a series of features (identity, context, perception...). Hence, meaning will be no longer universal, but it depends on the interaction established between human and world. Every human being is responsible for meaning creation, by means of his/her own iteration with real world.

Besides, this philosophical movement states that figurative language and meaning are not peripheral. Metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole and irony, among others, are considered by Cognitivists as central. In fact, figurative language is present, in a high degree, in our daily expressions and discourses, with the aim of enabling us to understand abstract terms by means of more concrete concepts. Along these lines, (Ruiz

de Mendoza, Peña, Pérez, Mairal and Teomiro, 2017: 311) the limits between literal and figurative language are blurred. An expression will never be black or white, but a more or less representative example of the previous forms of language.

Taking into account these ideas and the hypothesis listed above, Lakoff (1987: 64) introduced a pioneering concept in the cognitive studies of language. He affirmed that our knowledge is arranged in *Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs)*, which he defined as “conventional conceptual representations of the way we perceive and organize reality.” (Tercedor Sánchez et al., 2012: 19). Following this author, Cognitive Models can be classified as follows: propositional, image schemas, metaphorical, and metonymic. However, all of them are used to underlie human conceptualization since the emphasis of this enterprise was upon “relating the systematicity exhibited by language directly to the way mind is pattern and structured, and in particular to conceptual structure and organisation” (Evans and Green, 2006: 15-16).

## **2.2 Cognitive Semantics**

Based on those principles, a narrower branch was developed, termed as Cognitive Semantics. It was defined as a contemporary approach to the linguistic meaning, in which language is used as a methodological tool in order to study mental concepts in relation with human experience and culture.

To such a degree, we will make use of this approach in order to understand how conceptual tools work on relation to meaning; and how companies manipulate them in order to draw our conceptual attention.

In this context, “Cognitive Semantics is an approach to the analysis of natural language that originated in the late seventies and early eighties in the work of George Lakoff, Ron Langacker, and Len Talmy, and focuses on language as an instrument for organizing, processing, and conveying information.” (Geeraerts and Cuyckens, 2007:3). As it occurred with Cognitive Linguistics, this innovative discipline was developed as a reaction against the objectivist world-view and consequently, against formal linguistics. As Talmy (2000:4) stated the right way to study meaning is to focus on the conceptual content and how it is expressed in language.

In this respect, a collection of approaches and several principles were developed, which constituted the basis for these semantic phenomena (Evans and Green, 2006:178).

The first principle which was stated was that conceptual structure is embodied. This principle explains the relationship between conceptual structure and the ways in which the external world is experienced. From this idea, the embodied cognition thesis was developed and the concept of image schema was introduced.<sup>1</sup> An *image schema* is a conceptual model which used the information we acquire from experience in order to create a mental concept. This concept will be used, later on, to create metaphorical projections like the one utilised by Lakoff and Johnson (1980:32) in their example “He *fell into* a depression”. In this conceptual metaphor the CONTAINER image schema is projected onto the conceptual domain of STATES.

The second principle states that semantic structure is conceptual structure. Language refers to concepts in the mind of the speaker. For cognitive linguistics, it is argued that semantics consists in: on the one hand, a lexical part called linguistic concepts, which refers to conventional meaning; and on the other hand, conceptual structure which is associated with those concepts that are not related with concrete words.

Based on this theoretical approach, cognitive semantics explains that conventional meaning is just a part of the whole structure of meaning, which means that meaning goes further than the conventional significance of elements.

The third principle takes meaning representation as encyclopaedic and states that words are not just a package of meaning, but they have: on one side, a conventional meaning (i.e. dictionary view), and on the other side, conceptual meaning related to human’s cultural and social knowledge. However, it does not mean conventional meaning is useless owing to the fact that it is considered, according to cognitive semantics, a “prompt” for the construction of meaning.

The last principle explains that meaning-construction is conceptualisation. The language and words themselves do not entail meaning, but could be used as the base for its construction<sup>2</sup>. According to cognitive semantics meaning is constructed at the conceptual level, which means it is considered a process, rather than static and conventional piece of information.

From these basic hypotheses, further investigations about these phenomena have been carried out, which has allowed us to delve into semantic resources found in cognition and how advertising take advantage of them.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a thesis which holds that our conceptual organization arises from our experience.

<sup>2</sup> Use conventional meaning as the base for conceptual meaning development.

### **2.3 Conceptual Metaphor: Primary vs. Resemblance Metaphor**

Among Lakoff's Cognitive Models listed in section 2.1, we will focus our attention in metaphorical models, which are of special relevance for our study.

Metaphors have been studied theoretically from the year 300a.C, onwards (Stibbe, 2015: 63). However, for over 2,000 years it was studied and conceived as another component (or trope) in the art of rhetoric. Based on this ancient consideration, the concept of metaphor continued to evolve as a crucial resource for ornamentation, i.e. embellishment of the language (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999).

Nonetheless, around the 1800s a group of scholars realised that this semantic resource was not a mere stylistic feature of language, but it is crucial in our use of the language. In other words, a great percentage of our discourse is composed by metaphorical language (Grady, 1997:5). Along these lines, as we have stated in our previous sections 2.1 and 2.2, if language is a reflection of our cognitive system, our thought should be metaphorical in nature.

From this realisation, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson developed their work *Metaphors We Live by* (1980) laying the foundations for the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In it Lakoff, Johnson and their collaborations related this idea "to two of the central assumptions associated with cognitive semantics [...] the first is the embodied cognition thesis and the second is the thesis that semantic structure reflects conceptual structure" (Evans and Green, 2006: 286).

Lakoff and Johnson examined a broad range of metaphorical expressions in order to obtain evidences of their main idea: our cognitive structure is organised by means of correspondences between conceptual domains. In other words, we structure one conceptual domain in terms of other. This idea was illustrated with the example: LOVE IS A JOURNEY, which will help us to understand their approach.

For these linguists pre-conceptual embodied experiences trigger cognitive connections between the domain of LOVE RELATIONSHIPS and the domain of JOURNEYS. Hence, as Lakoff and Johnson (1999) stated, LOVE is conventionally structured in terms of JOURNEYS. This fact will allow us to incorporate into our language sentences such as the ones illustrated below, in Table 1.

Table 9.1 Mappings for LOVE IS A JOURNEY

| Source: JOURNEY            | Mappings | Target: LOVE               |
|----------------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| TRAVELLERS                 | →        | LOVERS                     |
| VEHICLE                    | →        | LOVE RELATIONSHIP          |
| JOURNEY                    | →        | EVENTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP |
| DISTANCE COVERED           | →        | PROGRESS MADE              |
| OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED      | →        | DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED   |
| DECISIONS ABOUT DIRECTION  | →        | CHOICES ABOUT WHAT TO DO   |
| DESTINATION OF THE JOURNEY | →        | GOALS OF THE RELATIONSHIP  |

Table 1. “Everyday expressions illustrated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in order to describe aspects of a love relationship in our daily language” (Evans, 2006: 294).

On the basis of the above, metaphors were described as “a mapping from a source domain to a target domain” (Stibbe, 2015:64); conceiving the target as the domain being described (LOVE), and the source as the domain used for the description of the target.

Assuming this is the case, it remains to be explained why those connections are established between domains. Following Ruiz de Mendoza, Pérez, Peña, Mairal and Teomiro (2017: 365), in this concrete example, those domains are associated by means of the basic metaphor or *central correspondence*: GOALS ARE DESTINATIONS. This basic correspondence functions as follows: in connection to goals we have people who want to reach them; and in connection to destination we have people who travel to reach a destination. Therefore, we associate that people travel to a place because their goal is to reach that destination.

The result is that these domains are conceptually blocked together and thus metaphorical correspondences, like the ones listed in Table 2, are established.

- (15) a. Look *how far* we’ve *come*.  
b. We’re at *a crossroads*.  
c. We’ll just have to *go our separate ways*.  
d. We can’t *turn back* now.  
e. I don’t think this relationship is *going anywhere*.  
f. *Where* are we?  
g. We’re *stuck*.  
h. It’s been *a long, bumpy road*.  
i. This relationship is *a dead-end street*.

Table 2. “Mapping from LOVE and JOURNEY by Lakoff and Johnson (1980)” (Evans, 2006: 295).

Taking into account the previous perspective, the relation between different domains in a metaphor is established: (1) by means of similarity (termed as *resemblance metaphors*); or (2) by means of experiential correlation (coined as *primary metaphors*).



Let us explain these notions in detail, since our analysis in Section 5 will make extensive use of them.

By *Resemblance metaphors* we refer to those “based on perceptual similarities” (Pérez-Hernández, 2019:2). That is to say, those in which the source and target domain possess common traits –either physical or conceptual- as in PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS metaphors. In “*Achilles is a lion*”, for example, Achilles and lion are separated entities that come together because of a common characteristic: the way they fight. In other words (Ruiz de Mendoza and Galera, 2014: 41), they share a series of traits (aggressiveness, ferocity, instinct...), which will be clustered together under the umbrella of the notion of courage.

There are also *Primary metaphors* What makes correlation-based or primary metaphors different from resemblance metaphors is that their source domains are bodily grounded in sensory-motor experiences. This allows us to generate metaphors like HAPPY IS UP in sentences like “*I was feeling low but he knew how to cheer me up*”.

This revolutionary conception (Ortiz, 2010: 164) originates in the pairing of different concepts during childhood because of a simple fact: they tend to occur together in reiterated experiences. In other words, these metaphors arise from the relationship between us and the world that we inhabit, and, therefore, they tend to be acquired automatically and unconsciously.

Along these lines, some authors have worked on the process that encompasses the creation of these sorts of metaphors. Among them, Grady (1997: 19) introduced a model “which relates experiences to metaphors, via several intermediate stages”.

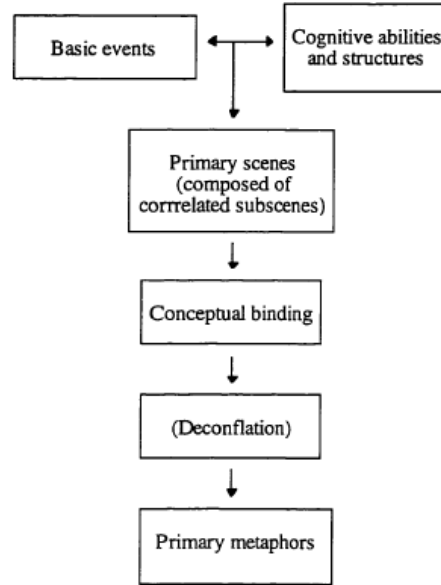


Figure 1. “From primary events to primary metaphors: primary metaphor formation process” (Grady, 1997: 20).

As a consequence of this process, primary metaphors, such as the ones illustrated in Table 3, are built in our cognition and so are each target and source domain.

| <u>Source</u>       |   | <u>Target</u>             | <u>Grounding</u>   |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| HEAVINESS           | → | DIFFICULTY                | {Difficulty of lifting heavy objects}  |
| HUNGER              | → | DESIRE                    | {Correlation between physical sensation and focus on finding food}                                   |
| ITCH                | → | COMPULSION TO ACT         | {Correlation between physical sensation and compulsion to scratch}                                   |
| BRIGHTNESS          | → | HAPPINESS                 | {Correlation between bright light and safety, warmth, etc.}  |
| SEEING              | → | KNOWING/<br>UNDERSTANDING | {Experiences where information is gathered through the visual channel}                               |
| WARMTH              | → | AFFECTION                 | {Correlation between affection and body warmth (produced by proximity)}                              |
| PHYSICAL CONNECTION | → | CAUSAL RELATEDNESS        | {The joint motion of objects which are physically connected}   |
| PROXIMITY           | → | SIMILARITY                | {Natural co-location of similar objects; similar conditions in spatially contiguous locations; etc.} |

Table 3. “list of primary metaphors and identification of source and target domains” (Grady, 1997: 27).

As noted in the introduction, we will take advantage of this theoretical background, in order to analyse how primary metaphors work in printed advertisements of tangible and intangible products.

### **3. State of the art**

Advertising companies are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of primary metaphors for marketing, and the development of noteworthy adverts. However, specific studies of primary metaphors in relation to this area are scarce and mostly directed to verbal corpus-based analysis.

Primary metaphors have been studied by notable academics within the discipline (Johnson 1997; Narayanan 1997; Grady 1997; Evans and Green 2006; Ruiz de Mendoza, Pérez, Peña, Mairal and Teomiro 2017). Nonetheless, as Ortiz (2010:162) stated, “the existence of primary metaphors in visual rhetoric has not been examined, nor have they been used as basic units in the analysis of complex visual metaphors”. As a matter of fact, studies on primary metaphors concerning printed advertising have not been developed until 2010.

The first relevant findings in this area were developed by Ortiz (2010, 2011). In her work, she concentrates on those visual primary metaphors found on printed adverts and known as “symmetrical object alignment”, i.e. Joseph Grady’s (1997) “SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT” primary metaphor. In her study, she offers a detailed explanation about how advertising companies tend to align two or more different objects –which seem to hold no relationship- in order to trigger a metaphorical connection. To such a degree, the interpretation of one domain in terms of the other will be possible thanks to our previous experiences, rather than to the existence of real similarity between the lined-up objects.

This revolutionary idea opposed other theories based on the study of primary metaphors within the field of advertising. One example was the Morris and Waldman’s (2011) research, in which they concluded that: (1) metaphors based on spatial orientation were mostly found in a textual mode; and (2) instances of those metaphors based on region and position, were not found.

Later on, other authors, such as Yu (2011) and Pérez Sobrino (2017), developed further analysis on this topic and provided evidence concerning metaphorical complexes in TV and printed advertisements. In their theories, primary metaphors would be understood as metaphorical compounds or elements, respectively, which enable the resemblance mapping between domains. Nonetheless, in Ming-Yu’s 2017 publication, he recognised the importance of primary metaphors within complex multimodal metaphors due to their universality. In other words, he underlined that primary metaphors are a useful tool

in advertising since they are understood similarly by everyone despite their culture, traditions etc.

Pérez-Hernández (2019) confirms Ortiz's findings, and offers additional information about the functions performed by primary metaphors in this field. This author offers "an in-depth analysis of multimodal primary metaphors in fast food printed advertising" (Pérez-Hernández, 2019: 3). Along these lines, her paper brings Grady's primary metaphors – as will be illustrated in Table 4- into the area of printed advertisements, including both: (1) a representative example of each metaphor, and (2) its correspondent explanation, functioning and analysis.

| PRIMARY METAPHOR   | MOTIVATION  | EXAMPLE  |
|--|---|--|
| THE NATURE OF AN ENTITY IS ITS SHAPE   | The tendency to draw inferences about an object from its shape.<br>The correlation between an object's shape and its behavior.                                      | Democracy takes very different forms in different countries.               |
| SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT  | Objects may be oriented in the same way because they serve similar functions, are involved in similar processes or acted on by similar forces.                      | Her new dress is very much in line with those worn by her coworkers.       |
| IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL   | Being in a central position allows maximum access to, control over, causal effect on surrounding objects.   | That issue is central to these negotiations.                               |
| IMPORTANCE IS SIZE/VOLUME  | The correlation between size/ volume of objects and the value, threat, difficulty, etc. they represent as we interact with them.                                    | Tomorrow is a big day for this organization.                               |
| GOOD IS BRIGHT   | Correlations between light and safety, dark and danger.   | The outlook has brightened since the new council took office.              |
| HAPPY IS UP (Related metaphors: HEALTHY IS UP, BEING CONSCIOUS IS BEING UP)  | The correlation between happiness and erect body posture. And/or correlation between being in a higher position (e.g. on a hill) and feeling safe, in control, etc. | I was feeling low yesterday, but the good weather has really picked me up. |
| KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING (Related metaphors: IMPORTANCE IS BEING IN FOCUS, IMPORTANCE IS BEING IN THE FOREGROUND, IMPORTANCE IS BEING NEAR) | The correlation between visual perception and the conscious awareness of information.   | I see what you mean.   |

Table 4. "list of primary metaphors, motivation and example in printed advertising" (Pérez-Hernández, 2019: 5).

All in all, specific literature on primary metaphors within the genre of advertising is scarce and further investigation could be carried out. For this reason, the following

research introduces an innovative topic concerning primary metaphors in printed advertising. Specifically, we will compare the pervasiveness and functions of primary metaphors, presented in tangible and intangible product advertising.



## 4. Corpus and Metaphor Identification

### 4.1 Corpus Selection

In accordance with the research objectives stated in Section 1 and the needs for research explained in Section 3, the present study offers a corpus-based analysis including both a quantitative and qualitative exploration of those primary metaphors which are found in tangible and intangible printed advertising. To guarantee the diversity of our corpus of study, we have compiled 60 printed advertisements, 30 of which belong to tangible products advertising and 30 to intangible products. It is important to underline that we have tried to choose representative samples, thus the primary metaphor identification was as easy and clear as possible.

Taking these criteria into consideration, our corpus encompasses the following list of brands subdivided into its correspondent categories:

Intangible

| Category                   | Brands   |
|----------------------------|--|
| Banking entity             | Canara, CIT, Citi, Lloyds, HSB, Beneficial, ANB, ATM, Indian Bank      |
| Insurance companies        | ABC, Leaplife, Anytown, Indiana Form Bureau, RACQ, Navigator & General |
| Removable energy companies | Equinor  |
| Media-service platforms    | Disney, HBO  |
| Telephony                  | Movistar, O2, Talk Talk  |

*Table 5. List of Intangible categories and brands which form the corpus of study.*

## Tangible

| Category  | Brands                                      |
|-----------|---|
| Cologne   | Lancôme, Dior, YSL, Loewe, Leaders, Channel |
| Jewellery | Swarovski, Pandora, Links London            |
| Fast food | Burger King, Mc Donalds, Dunkin Donuts, KFC |
| Drinks    | Guinness, Carlsberg, Heineken               |

Table 6. List of Tangible categories and brands which form the corpus of study.

All the examples included in Table 5 and Table 6 – the corpus of analysis- have been selected from two different databases: an American social media web called *Pinterest*, and in a simple *Google Images* search. To guarantee the objectiveness of the corpus, the first 30 ads for each category have been selected from each of the two aforementioned sources.

### 4.2 Metaphor Identification

Following Pérez-Hernández (2019:9) primary metaphors “cannot yet be retrieved by means of automatized corpus searcher, therefore, their identification still needs to be manually carried out by the analyst”. Albeit this method involves certain risks – i.e. errors or subjectivity-, it is the only method at hand for primary metaphors identification.

On the basis of that, the following steps have been followed so as to identify these metaphors in printed advertising. We have started by making a list of possible tangible products and intangible services in order to begin the searching process. Once we have found out the advertisements, we have devoted the next step to locate the product/services being advertised. We have then proceeded to analyse the product down to the last detail, including background and foreground elements, with the aim of detecting possible source domains of primary metaphors which are visually-related with the product/service. The last step of the process involves comparing the results – the find- with two different lists of primary metaphors (Grady 1997; Pérez-Hernandez 2019) for potential matches. If some details were included regarding light or bright, we



turned to Grady's (1997) list to look for those metaphors that had the notion of "bright" as the source domain.

Nevertheless, it is worth highlighting that all the instances have not been included in the corpus. As a matter of fact, adverts have been complied following concrete criteria, i.e. taking into account representativeness, variety, and clarity. Thus, necessary research has been made in order to prove the official nature of those advertisements included in the corpus as sometimes advertisements are fakes or they have been retouch.



## 5. Results and Discussion

This section provides an analysis of the printed advertisements which make up our corpus, by following the organisation of our specific objectives listed in Section 1. Moreover, it offers a detailed explanation of the results which arise from the correspondent discussion.

### 5.1 Objective 1

As stated in the introduction, objective 1 seeks to assess the pervasiveness of primary metaphors, in comparison to resemblance metaphors, in printed advertisements. In this regard, the findings of our research are the following.

Each of the 60 advertisements that comprise our corpus includes one or more instances of metaphorical expressions, encompassing a total amount of 104 metaphors, of which 94 examples are primary metaphors and just 10 are resemblance metaphors. As Table 7 reflects, the total number of primary metaphors is noticeably higher than that of the resemblance metaphors.

| Type of Metaphor     | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------|------------|
| Primary Metaphor     | 94     | 90.4%      |
| Resemblance Metaphor | 10     | 9.6%       |
| <b>Total</b>         | 104    | 100%       |

*Table 7. Primary vs. Resemblance metaphors.*

Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that the number of primary metaphors (94) is also markedly higher than that of the advertisements compiled (60). This reveals that there are a great number of advertisements that contain more than one embodied metaphors, which interact reinforcing the conceptual effect.

Taking into account these numeric data and percentages, the results come to confirm previous studies that reveal the pervasiveness of primary metaphors in printed advertisements, such as those by Pérez-Hernández (2013, 2019).

### 5.2 Objective 2

In this respect, it is important to focus our attention on the connection between embodied metaphors and the advertised products. To that end, we will begin by

providing an inventory of the source and target notions which are communicated by those primary metaphors.

Zooming in on the collection of primary metaphors contained in our corpus, a total number of 9 different metaphors have been identified. My rough calculations summarized in Table 8 confirm that 4 primary metaphors stand out from the rest (i.e. GOOD IS BRIGHT, IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL, IMPORTANT IS SIZE/VOLUME, and HAPPY IS UP). Nonetheless, as stated above, this essay will provide an in-depth analysis of the domains – source and target- involve in each of them.

| Primary Metaphor                     | Number    | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| GOOD IS BRIGHT                       | 36        | 38.2%       |
| IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL                 | 16        | 17.0%       |
| IMPORTANT IS SIZE/ VOLUME            | 14        | 15.0%       |
| HAPPY IS UP                          | 14        | 15.0%       |
| IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT                  | 6         | 6.4%        |
| SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT              | 3         | 3.2%        |
| THE NATURE OF AN ENTITY IS ITS SHAPE | 3         | 3.2%        |
| QUANTITY IS VERTICAL ELEVATION       | 1         | 1.0%        |
| IMPORTANT IS BEING FOCUS             | 1         | 1.0%        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>94</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 8. Number and Percentage of primary metaphors per type.*

As we have explained in Section 2.3, the source domains found in embodied metaphors are grounded in sensory-motor experiences. For this reason, the source domains found in the previous table are mostly notions involving space/location (UP, CENTRAL, ALIGNMENT, and VERTICAL ELEVATION), size/volume (BIG), and visual properties (BRIGHT, FOCUS). As regards target domains, we shall distinguish between four different notions: abstract generic (SIMILARITY, NATURE), evaluation (IMPORTANCE, GOOD), emotional (HAPPINESS), and quantitative (QUANTITY). To some extent, it is true to say that both -source and target- domains of primary metaphors are a useful tool for marketing purposes since they intertwine basic ideas about the product and certain notions that easily introduced in the advert. Together, they trigger a conceptual correlation already established in human cognition, due to its experiential recurrence.

The view put forward above explains why those advertised products (fast food, perfumes, jewellery, beverage, banks, insurance companies etc.) do not function either as the source or as the target of these primary metaphors. Grady (1997:150) explained

that “all the source concepts in primary metaphors [...] refer to properties of, relations between, or actions involving objects, rather than objects themselves.” Following this line of reasoning Pérez-Hernández (2019:12) confirmed Grady’s idea, and she added that “in the case of primary metaphor in fast food advertisements [...] the product/service functions neither as their source, nor as their target.” Therefore, primary metaphors in tangible-product and intangible-product advertisements follow the same patterns: the advertised product will not function as any of the domains of the primary metaphors. It will simply function as the vehicle for the visual representation of the source domain involve in the primary metaphor involved. Consider the following example:



*Figure 2. Example of the primary metaphor GOOD IS BRIGHT in printed advertising.*

The product (i.e. the perfume) is presented by means of a spotlight that highlights the product and enables the consumer to perceive it as bright, in comparison to the rest of the bottles of perfume (i.e. the bottles situated in the foreground and the background). This light contrast introduced in the product performs a double function: (1) it draws the consumer’s attention towards the brilliance that the bottle emits, and (2) it triggers a question that needs an answer (i.e. Why is this object brighter than the rest?). The answer to this question is determined by an underlying embodied conceptual mapping

from “brightness” to “quality” (i.e. the primary metaphor GOOD IS BRIGHT), which guarantees the pertinent interpretation. In other words, we understand the bright bottle of perfume as good through an explicature which is straightforwardly connected with the product.<sup>3</sup> This will be the key for comprehending how that link already noted functions.

For this explicature to operate in our cognition, the bottle of perfume acts as a vehicle for the representation of the attribute, i.e. the source domain of the embodied metaphor (bright). Moreover, the explicature generated by this primary metaphor is universal (i.e. understood by members of different communities), since the correlation between its source and target domains is embodied and experiential. This peculiar trait “makes primary metaphors especially worthwhile for the needs of the present-day global advertising industry” (Pérez-Hernández, 2019: 14).

Nonetheless, the process that the embodied metaphor (i.e. GOOD IS BRIGHT) triggers in the consumer does not finish here. We have seen in the above paragraph that the consumer perceives the perfume with certain qualitative traits, in contrast with the rest. However, this quality (the concept of “good”), which functions as a target domain of the metaphor, is still rather generic and needs to be parameterised in order to reach the final and optimal interpretation. This will only be achieved if the parameterisation fulfils two different criteria: (1) it should be compatible with the conceptual nature of the advertised product (i.e. those traits that make the product good for the consumer); and (2) it should be compatible with the contextualization (i.e. the reasons why the perfume may be good for the consumer in different contexts). In other words, “such parameterisation requires a “metonymic projection of the EFFECT FOR THE CAUSE type” (Pérez-Hernandez, 2019: 14), which allows finding a trait that fits the context presented in the advertisement.

In the case of the product depicted in Figure 2, there is an element which favours this research: the column. The elevation produced by the column places the perfume in a superior location, in contrast with the rest, which triggers a connection between quality and superiority. On this basis, the quality of the product (i.e. what makes it good) may be understood as stemming from its superiority regarding every aspect. Consequently,

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<sup>3</sup> The concept of Explicature was firstly introduced by Sperber and Wilson (1995). Later authors such as Ruiz de Mendoza and Pérez-Hernandez (2003) have reinforced their ideas, and reintroduced the concept as an inferential activity, which makes use of pragmatics so as to transform an assumption schema into a full proposition. In other words, in explicatures meaning inferences are obtained by a small development of the literal form of the utterance.

the consumer's brain, unintentionally, will map from the effect (quality) to the cause (superiority), developing a metonymic domain reduction.<sup>4</sup> Figure 3 schematizes the conceptual process that explains the link between the product and the primary metaphor.

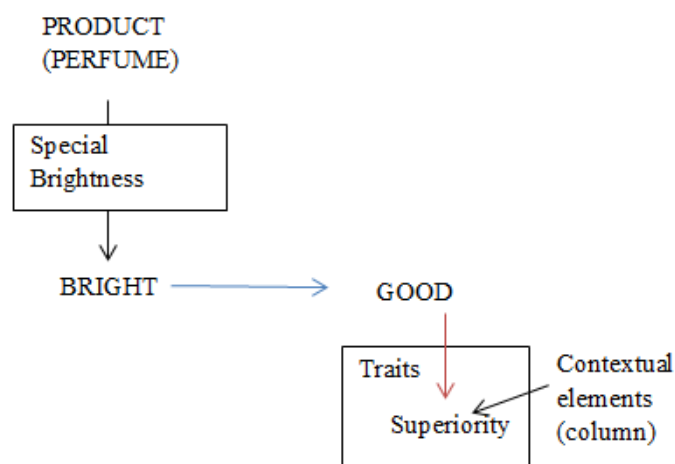


Figure 3. Schematization of the process by which a link is established between primary metaphor and the product. It includes the explicature which generates the primary metaphor *GOOD IS BRIGHT* (blue arrow), and the metonymic operation necessary for the parameterisation (red arrow). Black arrows involve less complex connections.

The corollary of this is that a link does exist between the primary metaphor and the advertised product. Although the creation process is complex - in contrast with that involved in resemblance metaphor- and it involves additional operations (i.e. explicatures and metonymies), it enriches the representation of the product. Moreover, it makes the interaction between different primary metaphors in the same advertisement possible.

Our analysis of the source and target domains involved in the advertisement in our corpus has revealed an unexpected finding. As shown in table 8, we have identified a recurrent embodied metaphor in intangible product advertisements (i.e. *IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT*), which is not included in Grady's (1997) list of primary metaphors. This deserves closer attention, since this primary metaphor has not been described in the literature yet. Let us illustrate this metaphor with the following example.

<sup>4</sup> By domain reduction (or target-in-source metonymies) we refer to those metonymies that involve "cutting down the amount of conceptual material used to construct the meaning interpretation" (Ruiz de Mendoza, 2011: 106). In other words, the target domain is a part of the source domain and thus a process of specification is developed.



Figure 4. Representation of a new primary metaphor found in our corpus: *IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT*.

In this advertisement we observe how the brightness surrounds the mother and the child, thus highlighting their importance, since the primary metaphor *IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT* is based on a recurring experiential correlation between the things that are bright and their importance or relevance (e.g. the sun, diamonds, etc.). Also the things that are bright are more easily perceived by our visual sense and, therefore, more relevant to us.

As Figure 4 illustrates, the relationship between the metaphor and the product is similar to that of the previous advertisement. Nonetheless, in the case under scrutiny, the advertisement contains a verbal element (“matters”) that expounds the target domain (i.e. *IMPORTANT*) of the primary metaphor involved and, thus, makes it explicit (i.e. the family is important because it is what matters most us) – clarifying the sense of the primary metaphor presented.

Our analysis of this new primary metaphor shows that the initial inventory of primary metaphors offered by Grady (1997) is not exhaustive and that further investigation would be needed in order to identify other primary metaphors that underlie our conceptualization of abstract domains.

### 5.3 Objective 3

In relation to Objective 3 our study aims at comparing the frequency of occurrence of primary metaphors in advertisements of tangible and intangible products.

As we have demonstrated in Section 5.1, the amount of metaphorical instances found in our corpus varies quantitatively on the basis of the following distinction: the type of conceptual metaphor (i.e. resemblance versus primary metaphors).



Nevertheless, it is interesting to speculate on what would happen if we focus our attention on the variability of primary metaphors regarding the subdivision of advertisements of tangible and intangible products.

Out of the 94 instances of embodied metaphors that comprise our corpus, 55 of them belong to the area of tangible product advertisements. By contrast, only 39 primary metaphors have been found in intangible printed advertisements.

| <b>Type of advertisement</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Tangible Products            | 55            | 58.5%             |
| Intangible Products          | 39            | 41.5%             |
| <b>Total</b>                 | 94            | 100%              |

*Table 9. Quantitative analysis of primary metaphors in Tangible vs. Intangible product advertisements.*

As Table 9 summarises, the use of conceptual metaphors is more widely spread in the depiction of tangible products. Therefore, it is not entirely fanciful to suggest that conceptual metaphors of this kind are slightly more productive in tangible printed advertisements.

In light of the previous statement, it is tempting to consider the reasons that trigger the aforementioned quantitative and qualitative distinction. For this reason, this part of Section 5.3 will be devoted to the development of a contrastive analysis, which will bring forth those qualities and traits that make primary metaphors more productive in relation to advertisements of tangible products.

In accordance with our previous analysis (i.e. Section 5.2), our corpus is formed by 9 embodied metaphors which interact differently with the product, in order to produce the correspondent conceptual effect. Nonetheless, if we isolate those primary metaphors used in tangible product advertisements from those found in intangible product advertisements, two observations arise: (1) some embodied metaphors are only present in tangible-product advertisements; and (2) even the same primary metaphor appears in both corpora (i.e. tangible vs. intangible product advertisements), there are marked quantitative differences in their use depending on the nature of the product.

| <b>Primary Metaphors in advertisements of Tangible products</b> | <b>Number of instances</b> | <b>Primary Metaphors in Advertisements of Intangible products</b> | <b>Number of instances</b> |
|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| THE NATURE OF AN ENTITY IS ITS SHAPE                            | 2                          | THE NATURE OF AN ENTITY IS ITS SHAPE                              | 1                          |
| QUANTITY IS VERTICAL ELEVATION                                  | 1                          | QUANTITY IS VERTICAL ELEVATION                                    | 0                          |
| IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL  | 14                         | IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL  | 2                          |
| IMPORTANT IS BEING FOCUSED                                      | 1                          | IMPORTANT IS BEING FOCUSED  | 0                          |
| SIMILARITY IS ALINGMENT   | 2                          | SIMILARITY IS ALINGMENT   | 0                          |
| IMPORTANT IS SIZE OR VOLUME                                     | 14                         | IMPORTANT IS SIZE OR VOLUME                                       | 0                          |
| GOOD IS BRIGHT  | 18                         | GOOD IS BRIGHT  | 18                         |
| HAPPY IS UP   | 2                          | HAPPY IS UP   | 12                         |
| IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT   | 0                          | IMPORTANT IS BRIGHHT  | 6                          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>55</b>                  |   | <b>39</b>                  |

*Table 10. Different embodied metaphors regarding the distinction between tangible and intangible product advertisements.*

As reported in Table 10, one of the main reasons that make primary metaphors more numerous in advertisements of tangible products is the incorporation of embodied metaphors such as: SIMILARITY IS ALINGMENT; which is not productive in intangible product advertisements. Following Ortiz (2010: 166) “this primary metaphor is created when we observe similar objects with the same orientation, because they are similar and/or because the orientation is the basic parameter for perceptual and cognitive classification.” In other words, as Figure 5 represents, this primary metaphor is based on the manipulation of the product in such a way that it becomes aligned with other differing, but somehow conceptually compatible, entity.



Figure 5. *SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT* metaphorical representation.

The advertisement in figure 5 depicts a beautiful woman with a marked figure and a noteworthy golden dress, which is aligned with a bottle of perfume occupying the same position and displaying a shape and colour similar to those of the woman. Along these lines, the experiential correlation of similarity and aligned entities triggers the aforementioned embodied metaphor and the conceptual association.

Therefore, it is the functioning of the primary metaphor itself, what makes it difficult to introduce the *SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT* metaphor in advertisements of intangible products. As intangible products (i.e. banks, platforms, etc.) are characterised by an abstract nature, it would be more complex to represent the product. The lack of concreteness implies the involvement of extra cognitive models (i.e. metonymies) for the physical representation of the product. This involves a higher cognitive complexity and, thus, a lower degree of effectiveness of the advertisement.

At the same time it is true to say that the manipulation of the product so as to line it up is also a drawback. Its abstract nature makes it harder to move the product through the three axes, which is the key point in order to achieve the final result and the correct interpretation.

Besides, the resemblance metaphor motivated by this primary metaphor (i.e. in this case the bottle of perfume is the figure of an attractive and glamorous woman) is more effective in tangible products. Since the product and the woman are visually aligned, “the consumer is urged to search for similarities between them” (Pérez-Hernandez, 2019: 26). Based on that, the search for similar traits within the correspondent *cognitive*

*frames* will be more straightforward if the physical characteristics of the products are clearer for the consumer.<sup>5</sup>

In sharp contrast with advertisements of intangible products, the aforementioned metaphor perfectly fits the advertising of tangible products, due to their concreteness. As tangible products are physical entities, the range of manipulation and representation is greater, i.e. it allows the publicist to play with its positions, proximity, shape, etc. To emphasize these similar traits between both elements.

Along the same line of reasoning, embodied metaphors such as IMPORTANT IS SIZE/VOLUME or IMPORTANT IS BEING FOCUSED are scarce in in advertisements of intangible products.



Figure 6. *IMPORTANT IS SIZE OR VOLUME* metaphorical representation in the advertisement of Tangible products.

If we focus our attention on Figure 6, we will realise that the product (i.e. the hamburger) is presented by means of a closeup which triggers an unusual perception in the consumer: the product appears to be big, in contrast with both the entire frame and other objects (i.e. the KFC bucket). However, this hyperbolic visual representation of the product is only achieved when the product being advertised is something concrete. That is to say, non-abstract entities (i.e. cars, hamburgers, perfumes, etc.) are well-endowed with physical properties such as size, volume, length, width... which are clear (i.e. perceptive) for the consumer. Therefore, they can be used to create specific angles, perspectives, and shots used for underlining certain traits of the product, concealing its defects, or simply providing a sensation that is not real at all.

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<sup>5</sup> Cognitive frame (Fillmore, 1982) refers to that cognitive notion that encompasses all the conceptual information that we have stored about a concept, and the conceptual relationships that are established between them.

At the same time it could be argued that the use of a real, quotidian product is also essential for the correct performance of the primary metaphor noted already. As consumers commonly come across these tangible products in real life, it might be easier to identify the exaggeration of certain traits in printed advertisements, especially if the product is contrasted with other physical entities that seem familiar to the receiver.

Furthermore, the sense that is being communicated (i.e. the source domain size or volume) does not have the same impact on intangible products as it has in tangible ones. These kinds of attributes are used to emphasise physical traits that attract the consumer's attention, however, intangible product advertisements are centred on the communication of qualitative traits that fit the nature of the product.

Finally, again, the fact of introducing an extra cognitive model (i.e. a metonymy) so as to physically represent the entity hinders the whole cognitive process, thus the final effect is not the same. In other words, if the representation of the entity is hyperbolised, the metaphorical processing would be slower because an extra effort is needed (i.e. the interpretation of the values related to that brand, the correct interpretation of the metonymy and finally the unfolding of the primary metaphor being used).

Yet another formal reason that contributes to the quantitative difference of primary metaphors the advertisements of tangible and intangible products is the presence of embodied metaphors that display spatial notions as their source domains. Some instances such as QUANTITY IS VERTICAL ELEVATION or IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL are few and far between the advertisements of intangible products. As shown in Table 10, out of the 17 metaphorical instances of this type, 15 belong to advertisements of tangible products and 2 are found in advertisements of intangible products.



Figure 7. *IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL* and *QUANTITY IS VERTICAL ELEVATION* metaphorical representation in Tangible products.

Figure 7 represents two embodied metaphors that are related to the location of the advertised product within a concrete position in space. The manipulation of these tangible products is used to communicate ideas regarding quantity and importance, introduced as the target domains of each of the primary metaphor. Due to the nature of the object (i.e. its concreteness) and its physical characteristics (i.e. volume, dimensions, etc.), it is possible to play with their spatial situation by placing one on top of the other, positioning the object in the centre, etc. (i.e. playing with the spatial axes in order to move the object inside the frame).

Moreover, different positions entail different meanings, thus it is beneficial and advantageous for the brands to introduce these kinds of primary metaphors, which can even be combined, to transmit the maximum number of ideas by using just a single object. Therefore, the communicative effort for the company is reduced and the communicated idea is more impactful.

Nonetheless, primary metaphors like the ones depicted in Figure 7 are not so common in advertisements of intangible products. This again may be due to the fact that intangible products, like services, are more difficult to represent visually, and therefore, they cannot be used as the vehicles of the source domains of this type of spatial primary metaphors.

Nonetheless, this is not to say that there are not spatial primary metaphors in advertisements of intangible products (See Table 10). In fact, embodied metaphors such as *GOOD IS UP* are quite productive in this kind of advertisements.



*Figure 8. GOOD IS UP metaphorical representation in advertisements of intangible products.*

The corollary of this is that the spatial position “UP” can be easily represented by recurring to the sky background in the advertisement. This in turn means that there is a situational manipulation without the necessity of transforming an abstract entity into a physical one, which allows the advertisement to be communicative, simple and productive at the same time. In other words, the sky activates the source domain of the metaphor (i.e. UP) in the absence of a visual representation of the intangible product. The use of the sky to activate the source domain of the metaphor triggers the activation of other metaphors, due to the characteristics that are normally assigned to the sky (light, brightness, etc.). Thus the primary metaphors GOOD IS BRIGHT is simultaneously activated, giving way to a cluster of primary metaphors, in which two different source domains (i.e. UP and BRIGHT) are mapped onto the same target domain (i.e. GOOD)

Our corpus yields numerous examples in which the same product serves as a vehicle for several primary metaphors that can share, or not, the same target domain. However, the key point to note is that these metaphorical clusters are mostly presented in the advertisements of tangible products, with a minimum of 2 combined metaphors and a maximum of 3. This in turn implies a greater number in the total amount of embodied metaphors.





*Figure 9. Metaphorical cluster representation: GOOD IS BRIGHT, IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL, IMPORTANT IS SIZE OR VOLUME.*

As Figure 9 illustrates advertisements of tangible products commonly use the product (i.e. perfume) as the vehicle for more than one metaphor that intertwine for a major semantic effect (i.e. GOOD IS BRIGHT, IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL and IMPORTANT IS SIZE OR VOLUME). This metaphorical combination is possible owing to the physical characteristics of the product. The nature of the object allows the publicist to play with it in terms of space, size and quality, which are compatible attributes as they do not share the same category.

For these reasons, advertisements of intangible products include a reduced number of metaphorical clusters. As they focus on emphasizing the qualitative traits of the service, it might be argued that the only metaphorical combinations that are introduced are: GOOD IS BRIGHT and GOOD IS UP (See Figure 8). This combination of primary metaphors is more appropriate for intangible products because: (1) the target domain is shared hence reinforcing the qualitative attributes of the product, which is something crucial for a non-perceptual entity; (2) both metaphors can be introduced without much productive effort. The representation of the sky (which activates the source domain “UP”) entails the introduction of elements such as clouds, the sun... which are details attributed to a clear sky and, at the same time, function as the source domain of “BRIGHT”; and (3) the representative process of the product becomes simpler. In other words, intangible products always require extra metonymic mapping for their physical representation.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, these kind of primary metaphors do not require of the

<sup>6</sup> Intangible services make use of metonymies in their advertisements for: (1) the realization of the abstract entity (COMPANY LOGO FOR COMPANY or CREDIT CARD FOR BANK) or (2) reinforcing the message or the metaphorical parameterization (See Section 5.2).



visual representation of the product, but just an additional spotlight integrated within the advertisement frame.



*Figure10. Metonymies in intangible product advertisements: CAR FOR FAMILY, RING FOR MARRIAGE, etc. That simplifies the parameterisation in the primary metaphor IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT.*

As Figure 10 represents, various metonymies are used together in the same advertisement to reinforce the target domain (i.e. debt), which is furthermore highlights by the brightness in the background (i.e. IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT). This metonymic accumulation makes it harder to introduce extra primary metaphors, since otherwise the cognitive effort in the consumer would be extreme and thus the metaphor would be less productive.

Indeed, it might be argued that the complexity of inserting a single primary metaphor in advertisements of intangible products is such that it hampers the possibility of placing various metaphors with different source domains (i.e. metaphorical clusters). *Multimodality* is thus used in advertisements of intangible products in order to facilitate the activation of the source domain and thus, making the mapping less costly (i.e. more productive).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Multimodality could be defined as a tool, mostly used in advertisement, that make use of one or two modes, to express the same meaning and thus emphasize message.



*Figure 11. Use of multimodality in advertisements of intangible products*

Figure 11, as most of advertisements of intangible products in our corpus, displays the use of two modes (i.e. visual and textual), which represent the same meaning (i.e. the embodied metaphor IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT). The use of these two modes draws the audience's attention to the source domain (i.e. BRIGHT) to such a degree that the activation of the metaphor occurs immediately and more effectively.

It seems that advertisements of intangible products need this extra mode to simplify the cognitive process, which is something that advertisements of tangible products do not commonly need owing to the reasons we have already noted above.

## 6. Conclusion

The present paper attempts to shed light onto the field of advertising by analysing the occurrences and functioning of primary metaphors in a finite collection of tangible and intangible products. The study, conducted on the basis of the aforementioned cognitive model, has brought forth: (1) a series of results already attested by previous authors, such as Yu (2011), Pérez Sobrino (2017), Ming-Yu (2017) and Pérez-Hernandez (2019); and (2) unpredicted findings that are worth mentioning.

First of all the quantitative analysis of the data has revealed that primary/embodied/correlational metaphors are more numerous, both in advertisements of tangible and intangible products, than resemblance metaphors.

Our study also corroborates Pérez-Hernandez (2019) findings to the effect that primary metaphors appear both in isolation and into patterns of conceptual interaction.

In addition, our quantitative analysis of the data has given rise to an inventory of each source and target domain that forms part of those primary metaphors found in our corpus. Our data shows that 9 different embodied metaphors are presented in the 60 printed advertisements, including a recurrent metaphorical instance (i.e. IMPORTANT IS BRIGHT), which is not included in Grady's (1997) list of primary metaphors.

The qualitative analysis of this data has resulted in the detailed description of the formal configurations and the correspondent functions that primary metaphors carry out in the advertisements. Primary metaphors establish a formal connection with the product being advertised by means of their source domains, i.e. the product becomes a vehicle for the representation of the source domain. The experiential co-relation - already embraced- allows the correspondent conceptual mapping between the domains, which unfolds the complete metaphor. However, in order to achieve their final sense, inferences and extra conceptual interactions are needed, such as explicatures and metonymies (i.e. effect for cause). This complex but automatic process entails relevant functions: (1) it conveys positive evaluations about the product, (2) it underlies specific aspects of the product and (3) it enables the cooperation with extra cognitive or textual tools (e.g. metonymies, resemblance metaphors, other primary metaphors, multimodality).

Finally, the study of primary metaphors in tangible and intangible products advertisements has also raised some quantitative and qualitative issues regarding their frequency of occurrence.

Our quantitative analysis reflects that primary metaphors in tangible products advertisements are more numerous than in intangible products advertisements.

Although our corpus is composed by 30 advertisements of each kind, embodied metaphors have been found to be more frequent and pervasive in their interaction with concrete products. As shown in the present study, the matter is not without relevance, since it has implications in the advertising of these two different types of products.

For this reason, on the basis of the aforementioned results, a qualitative analysis has been developed with the aim of detecting those traits, characteristics or features that make primary metaphors more productive and abundant in tangible product advertisements. The results obtained show that:

- (1) On the one hand, some metaphorical expressions such as SIMILARITY IS ALIGNMENT or IMPORTANT SIZE OR VOLUME are not found in advertisements of intangible products. The nature of the product (i.e. lack of concreteness) makes it harder to manipulate it, either the figure or the location, unless it is physically represented by means of a metonymy. Moreover, the formal structure and functioning of these specific metaphors hinders its usage in intangible products, as:
  - a. The physical properties of the product, in the metaphor SYMILARITY IS ALINGMENT, tend to favour the association of the objects being aligned, and therefore the motivation of the resemblance metaphor. Intangible products are difficult to represent visually, which hinders their alignment with other entities.
  - b. Both embodied metaphors aim to highlight those physical properties of a product that makes it better than any other. For example the size, the volume, the appearance or concrete details (i.e. colour, shape, etc.).
- (2) On the other hand, those metaphors that have to do with spatial orientation or location are scarce in relation to intangible products. Again, the nature of the product complicates the use of this kind of primary metaphors. As a matter of fact, what intangible product advertisements promote are services, hence the source domains have been shown to be unproductive in relation to imperceptible entities (i.e. in entities we are not able to possess). However, metaphorical expressions such as GOOD IS UP are presented in intangible products albeit it belongs to the location-in-space category. The perceptual representation of the

source domain – with a background- facilitates the cooperation with intangible products, since less manipulation is needed.

- (3) Finally, metaphorical clusters are more abundant in tangible products advertisements. The complexity of primary metaphor representation in intangible products advertisements, involves the necessity of extra cognitive operations (i.e. metonymy) and multimodality in order to ease the conceptual process and display a productive primary metaphor. The amount of combinations – textual, visual and cognitive- makes the use of primary metaphors more complex in the case of intangible products. Nonetheless, metaphors like GOOD IS UP and GOOD IS BRIGHT have been detected to co-occur in intangible products owing to the shared target domain and properties (i.e. up and bright are commonly correlated in our experiences).

From all this, we can state that the use of primary metaphors in the field of printed advertising is abundant and plays a more productive role in the advertising of tangible products. The advertising industry could apply the results obtained from this kind of analysis, when creating new printed advertisements, so as to detect the appropriate cognitive resource for the nature of each product. In addition, this study has also shown that Grady's list of primary metaphors is most probably incomplete. There is, therefore, still room for further studies devoted to the exploration of primary metaphors (i.e. Grady's initial list and formal aspects); and their role in the area of advertising.



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